

**THE RHODE ISLAND CONVENTION CENTER AUTHORITY 355th
MEETING OF THE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS October 27, 2011**

A meeting of the Board of Commissioners of the Rhode Island Convention Center Authority (hereinafter referred to as "Authority", the "CCA" or the "Board") was held on October 27, 2011 at 9:00 am at the Rhode Island Convention Center, pursuant to notice, at the Rhode Island Convention Center Boardroom, One Sabin Street, Providence, Rhode Island.

Board members present were Chairman, Jim Bennett, Commissioners, Bernie Buonanno, Jeff Hirsh, Dale Venturini, Patrick Butler, George Nee and Stan Israel.

Mr. Daugherty, Mr. Gunn and Ms. Carter were unable to attend.

Also present were James P. McCarvill, Executive Director, Betty Sullivan, Ken Mancuso and Kim Keough, Rhode Island Convention Center Authority; Tim Muldoon, Deb Tuton, Kathy Masino and Nancy Beauchamp, Convention Center; Larry Lepore, Cheryl Cohen, and Kaitlyn Bizier, Dunkin' Donuts Center; Steve Habi, Alan Chille and Doreen Vitale, VMA; Kristen McGrath and Martha Sheridan, PWCVB; Bob Bromley, Senate Fiscal Office; Greg Stack, Budget Office; Bruce Leach, Legal Counsel and Eileen Smith, Recording Secretary.

Mr. Bennett announced that Ms. Venturini would be honored on Tuesday at the PWCVB's Annual Meeting and encouraged everyone to attend. Recognizing a quorum Mr. Bennett called the meeting to

order at 9:18 AM. Mr. Bennett asked for a motion to approve the minutes of the September Board Meeting. Upon a motion duly made by Mr. Butler and seconded by Ms. Venturini it was unanimously

VOTED: to approve the minutes of the September meeting.

Noting that we lacked a quorum for the committee meetings on Tuesday, Mr. Bennett asked for a motion to approve the minutes of the September Audit Committee, Dunkin' Donuts Center Committee, Convention Center Committee and the Marketing Committee as previously presented. Upon a motion duly made by Mr. Butler and seconded by Mr. Buonanno it was unanimously

VOTED: to approve the minutes of the September committee meetings.

Mr. Bennett asked Mr. McCarvill to present the financial information. Mr. McCarvill said that for the month of September the VETS was \$265 to budget and (\$16,725) to the previous year. Mr. McCarvill stated that year to date net income was \$46,829 to budget and (\$15,659) to the prior year. Mr. McCarvill reminded the Board that expenses are expected to rise with increased activity at the theater. Mr. McCarvill reported the Convention Center net income for September was \$20,052 to budget and \$224,550 to the prior year. Year to date net income was \$98,027 to budget and (\$108,492 to the

prior year. Mr. McCarvill said that the Convention Center is keeping a close watch on expenses and that parking revenue is showing growth. Mr. McCarvill reported that the Dunkin' Donuts Center net income variance for the month of September was (\$63,318) to budget and (\$27,311) to the prior year. Year to date net income for the Dunk was (\$152,454) to budget and (\$175,667) to the prior year. Mr. McCarvill reported higher labor costs as well as repair and maintenance expenses were the cause of the variance. Mr. McCarvill stated that as the season progresses management expects a more favorable outcome. Mr. McCarvill reported that net income for the Authority income was \$96,241 to budget and (\$205,668) to the prior year. Year to date net income is \$104,256 to budget and \$109,148 to the prior year. McCarvill stated that consolidated net income for the month of September was \$53,240 to budget and (\$25,154) to the prior year. Year to date consolidated net income is \$96,655 to budget and (\$190,670) to the prior year.

MARKETING

Ms. Venturini asked Mr. Lepore and Ms. Cohen to address the Board. Mr. Lepore stated that we have been working with Providence Sports & Entertainment Group and said that they are doing a great job with sponsorships and signage. Ms. Cohen reported on the use of electronic media and distributed a media monitoring metrics indicating the earned media value. Mr. Lepore stated that TSO will be in the building for two shows the day after Thanksgiving and the

shows are selling well. Mr. Lepore noted that the Josh Groban concert is sold out and Jeff Dunham and Rascal Flatts concerts are both doing well. Mr. Bennett said that the Commissioners should take a look at PSE's operation. He said that the staff is on the phone constantly calling companies to sell group packages. Mr. Bennett stated that PSE has come up with several promotions that will include P. Bruins game tickets with the purchase of another event.

Ms. Venturini called upon Mr. Muldoon to update the Board on the Convention Center's marketing efforts. Mr. Muldoon distributed an update on the Convention Center's progress in meeting their goals. Mr. Muldoon reported on several tentative events that the staff is working to bring to contract. Mr. Muldoon noted that contracted events include Fidelity PWIS Manager Forum and Cheer & Dance Extreme, Northeast Open. Mr. Muldoon said that Who Wants to be a Millionaire is at present holding auditions in the building for the show. Mr. Buonanno asked if the financial goal was doable. Mr. Muldoon said that we are about where we were last year and he is confident that the goal will be met. Mr. Muldoon reported that there is a date conflict with the CVS Charity Classic and the Convention Center is unable to accommodate the event. Mr. Muldoon and Mr. Lepore reported that they are attempting to interest the group in using the Dunkin' Donuts Center for the dinner. Mr. Lepore said that he has sent pictures of the facility showing that a great event can be held in the building. Mr. Muldoon reported that Occupy Providence protesters were able to access the building during a Fidelity event.

He said that the protesters entered through the Westin connection. Mr. Muldoon said that an apology was made to Fidelity and that we are looking at additional security for these events.

Mr. Nee asked how the garage is doing and if we are close to capacity. Mr. Muldoon stated that the garage is fine at the moment but that we will be close to capacity in September when Hasbro moves more staff to the City. Ms. Venturini stated that the Downtown Improvement District has a great web-site showing all the parking areas in the City.

Ms. Venturini asked Ms. Sheridan to address the Board. Ms. Sheridan stated that Ms. Venturini received the Hall of Fame Award from the Hospitality Community. Ms. Sheridan reported that the CVB would be taking a trip to New York to meet with representatives of travel and tourism publications. Mr. Bennett stated that he would like to take part in the trip and Ms. Sheridan welcomed his interest. Ms. Sheridan noted that we have received some great publicity from the Today Show. She said that Matt Lauer had commented that Providence has the best Italian food he has ever had. The Today Show also had the Scialo sisters of Scialo's Bakery making cupcakes as part of a show. Ms. Sheridan noted that Major League Gaming is very pleased with the sales effort for their event. Ms. Sheridan said that Major League Gaming is not a gambling opportunity but people getting together to play video games. Ms. McGrath distributed the PWCVB's sales report (enclosed). Mr. Nee asked how the year is trending in comparison

with last year. Ms. McGrath stated that we are up to last year. Ms. Venturini said that we have doubled our efforts in this very difficult business environment. Mr. Bennett reported that the Biltmore is about to be purchased out of bankruptcy. Discussions ensued regarding the sale and the possible renovations. Ms. Sheridan noted that the hotel will probably remain open during renovations and the work will most likely be completed in phases. Ms. Sheridan stated that the Biltmore has remained a good partner through this economic hardship.

Mr. Habl reported that this month there is a great mix of events at the VETS. Mr. Habl noted that the Philharmonic season is going well. He also noted that a Horror Film Festival will be held on Saturday that is expected to attract a large audience. Mr. Habl reported that December is looking good for the Theater. He said that Providence College and Brown University are teaming up to perform a concert of Beethoven music. Mr. Habl thanked the Authority for the new sound and lighting equipment that is a big improvement for the building. He said that having our own equipment is saving the VETS money in rental fees.

Ms. Keough reported that this is the 20th anniversary of the P. Bruins and a special celebration is being planned. Ms. Keough stated that everyone is working together to promote the complex. She said that PSE has jumped right in and taken over group and suite sales.

Ms. Venturini said that she would like to hold a Board orientation to educate the new members on how the team works to market the complex and the City.

Ms. Venturini noted that a scholarship fund has been set up in memory of Steve Marra. She said the scholarship would be awarded to individuals interested in the food service or hospitality industry.

DUNKIN' DONUTS CENTER

Mr. Bennett reported that we have been approached by a company promoting an opportunity for us to participate in a 50/50. Mr. McCarvill explained the concept and said that this could be a help to Ms. Venturini's scholarship fund among other charities. Mr. McCarvill said that a 501 3c would be necessary to participate in the program. He also stated that this is being done at TD Bank North Garden and many other sporting venues including Fenway Park. Mr. McCarvill said that the company is willing to address the Board and explain their proposal.

Mr. Buonanno asked Mr. Lepore if the RFP for the sound system had been advertised. Mr. Lepore said that the RFP would be issued shortly. Questions were asked about the repairs to the building and the roof. Mr. Lepore stated that the leak was not the roof but the joints where the new addition meets the original building. Mr. Lepore said that for the time being the leaks have been repaired but that

most likely the sealant will not last.

Mr. Bennett noted that the Downtown Improvement District is looking for help. Discussions ensued regarding the Yellow Jackets and the assistance they provide to the hospitality industry in the City. Ms. Sheridan stated that visitors often ask for directions. She also noted that the visibility of the Yellow Jackets make our City a safer place for people to enjoy. Mr. Nee asked if the Authority could contribute. Mr. McCarvill said that other business are assessed a fee but we are exempt. He said that we store their heavy equipment but they are looking for additional assistance. Mr. Butler asked what DID will do for us. Mr. Lepore stated that the workers keep up the flower baskets and planters all over the City and patrol the streets and sidewalks during events. Mr. Lepore noted that we pay DID directly for certain shows that we expect to need more sidewalk clearing. Mr. Bennett asked for a motion for the Authority to use their best business judgment in calculating a contribution to the Downtown Improvement District to be capped at \$25,000 less the value of equipment storage and any other expenses already incurred. A motion, made by Mr. Hirsh seconded by Mr. Nee was unanimously

VOTED: that the Authority use their best business judgment in calculating a contribution to the Downtown Improvement District to be capped at \$25,000 less the value of equipment storage and any other incurred expenses.

Mr. Bennett asked if there was any new business. Mr. Hirsh suggested that some thought be given to a memorial for Dave Gavitt that would be placed in a prominent location in the Dunkin' Donuts Center. The Commissioners agreed that something special should be done in Mr. Gavitt's memory. Upon a motion duly made by Mr. Nee and seconded by Mr. Butler it was unanimously

VOTED: to adjourn at 10:28 AM